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Social development

Report of the Third Committee

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I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 16 September 2011, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its sixty-sixth session the item entitled:

"Social development:

"(a) Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly;

"(b) Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family;

"(c) Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing"

and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

2. The Third Committee considered the item at its 2nd to 5th, 11th, 16th, 22nd, 42nd to 46th and 49th meetings, on 3, 4, 11, 13 and 18 October and 8, 10, 15, 17, 18 and 22 November 2011. At its 2nd to 5th meetings, the Committee held a general discussion on sub-items (a) to (c). An account of the Committee's discussion is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.3/66/SR.2-5, 11, 16, 22, 42-46 and 49).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth: United Nations system coordination and collaboration related to youth (A/66/61-E/2011/3);

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(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and beyond (A/66/62-E/2011/4);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto (A/66/121);

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (A/66/124);

(e) Report of the Secretary-General on the realization of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals for persons with disabilities (A/66/128);

(f) Report of the Secretary-General on the International Year of Youth: Dialogue and Mutual Understanding (A/66/129);

(g) Report of the Secretary-General on cooperatives in social development and implementation of the International Year of Cooperatives (A/66/136);

(h) Report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing (A/66/173);

(i) Report of the Secretary-General on the world social situation 2011: the global social crisis (A/66/226).

4. At the 2nd meeting, on 3 October, the Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs made a statement. The Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights made introductory statements (see A/C.3/66/SR.2).

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.3/66/L.6 and Rev.1

5. At the 16th meeting, on 13 October, the representative of Brazil, on behalf of Brazil and Japan, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers" (A/C.3/66/L.6), which read:

"*The General Assembly*,

"*Recalling* its resolution 63/153 of 18 December 2008 on the follow-up to the implementation of the International Year of Volunteers, and the commemoration of its tenth anniversary,

"*Noting* that the momentum created by the International Year has contributed to the vibrancy of volunteerism globally with the involvement of more people, from a broader cross-section of societies,

"*Recognizing* that volunteerism is an important component of any strategy aimed at, inter alia, such areas as poverty reduction, sustainable development, youth empowerment, climate change, disaster prevention and management, social integration, humanitarian action and peacebuilding,

"*Bearing in mind* the need for an integrated and coordinated follow-up to the International Year of Volunteers to be pursued in the relevant parts of the United Nations system,

"1. *Welcomes* the successful observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers in 2011, and welcomes also the growth and development of volunteerism since the International Year of Volunteers in 2001;

"2. *Acknowledges* that the tenth anniversary has provided the opportunity and impetus for an increased and unprecedented level of collaboration among Governments, the United Nations system, civil society, private sector partners, and people from a broad cross-section of societies all over the world, and reaffirms the need for further efforts to achieve the goals of the International Year in the areas of the recognition, facilitation, networking and promotion of volunteerism worldwide;

"3. *Commends* the contributions from national and international volunteers for their fundamental role in disaster prevention and recovery, recently evidenced in their performance in the aftermath of natural catastrophes, such as mass landslides and floods in south-eastern Brazil and the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake;

"4. *Recognizes* the valuable contribution of volunteering, including traditional forms of mutual aid and self-help and other forms of civic participation, to social and economic development, thus benefiting society at large, communities and volunteer networks;

"5. *Encourages* Member States to support the establishment of knowledge and information platforms and focal points at international, regional, national and local levels to foster the sharing of resources and good practices of volunteerism that could be adapted, implemented, replicated and scaled up on a sustained basis;

"6. *Calls upon* Member States to enact sound regulatory frameworks with a view to providing well-defined conditions of service for volunteers, and to clear any ambiguities that can lead to abuses on the part of either volunteers or organizations, thus enabling the establishment of a good governance system to manage volunteerism;

"7. *Reaffirms* the need to recognize and promote all forms of volunteerism in order to engage and benefit all segments of society, including women, children, young persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, minorities, migrants and those who remain excluded for social or economic reasons;

"8. *Acknowledges* the importance of civil society organizations to the promotion of volunteerism, and, in that respect, recognizes that strengthening the dialogue and interaction among civil society, Member States and the United Nations contributes to the expansion of volunteerism;

"9. *Takes note* that volunteerism contributes to human development, and calls on Governments to integrate volunteering more fully into peace and development programmes and initiatives that offer opportunities to build strong and cohesive volunteer coalitions around shared goals at local, national, regional and international levels;

"10. *Takes note* of the actions by Governments to support volunteerism, and reiterates its call upon them to continue such action;

"11. *Calls for* the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to further recognize and integrate volunteerism in its various forms into their policies, programmes and reports, and encourages the recognition and inclusion of volunteer contributions in future United Nations and other relevant international conferences;

"12. *Recognizes* the importance to further involve all relevant partners, including civil society, and facilitate their cooperation and coordination to create an enabling environment for individuals to engage in volunteer activities and promote the well-being of volunteers, welcomes in this regard the expanding involvement of the private sector in support of volunteerism, and encourages its further engagement by expanding corporate volunteering and employee volunteer activities;

"13. *Welcomes* the work of the United Nations Volunteers as the focal point for the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers in support of Member States, including by co-hosting the International Year of Volunteers plus 10 regional consultations and the global volunteer conference, and requests the United Nations Volunteers to continue their efforts to promote volunteerism, including through the mobilization of national and international volunteers and the development of newer and innovative recruitment modalities such as on-line volunteering;

"14. *Emphasizes* that people-to-people relations are the core value of volunteerism, and encourages further efforts to build and strengthen networks among volunteers and all relevant partners at the national, regional and international levels, including the World Volunteer Web as a global networking hub;

"15. *Welcomes* the active engagement of national committees and coordinating bodies in the promotion of the International Year of Volunteers plus 10, and emphasizes the importance of further enhancing this global network to build their partnership and share experiences and good practices;

"16. *Recognizes* the need to further strengthen the link between domestic volunteers and international volunteer-sending organizations to facilitate the globalization of volunteer opportunities;

"17. *Emphasizes* the importance of volunteering and the participation of individuals and communities in a holistic and people-centred approach to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and human security and in the deliberation on the global sustainable development agenda 'beyond 2015', including that arising from the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012;

"18. *Also emphasizes* that volunteerism offers unique opportunities for youth engagement and leadership to contribute to the development of peaceful and inclusive societies, while also allowing youth to acquire skills, build their capacities and increase their employability;

"19. *Requests* Governments and the United Nations system to work together with other volunteer-involving organizations to support efforts to enhance the security and protection of volunteers;

"20. *Looks forward* to a full report on the marking of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers, as well as recommendations to further integrate volunteering in peace and development during the next decade and beyond, bearing in mind the request to the Secretary-General to report on this subject to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session under the item entitled 'Social development'."

6. At its 45th meeting, on 17 November, the Committee had before it a revised draft resolution (A/C.3/66/L.6/Rev.1), submitted by the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.6 and Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Côte d'Ivoire, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, Finland, Germany, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Latvia, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Monaco, Mongolia, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Peru, Poland, the Republic of Korea, Serbia, Singapore, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Ukraine, the United States of America and Uruguay. Subsequently, Albania, Andorra, Azerbaijan, the Bahamas, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Costa Rica, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Jamaica, Kenya, Lebanon, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Nicaragua, the Niger, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, the Philippines, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Senegal, South Africa, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Vanuatu and Yemen joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

7. At the same meeting, the Committee was informed that the draft resolution had no programme budget implications.

8. Also at the 45th meeting, the representative of Japan made a statement and orally corrected the text of the draft resolution (see A/C.3/66/SR.45).

9. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.6/Rev.1 as orally corrected (see para. 10).

III. Recommendation of the Third Committee

10. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 63/153 of 18 December 2008 on the follow-up to the implementation of the International Year of Volunteers, and the commemoration of its tenth anniversary,

Noting that the momentum created by the International Year has contributed to the vibrancy of volunteerism globally with the involvement of more people, from a broader cross-section of societies,

Recognizing that volunteerism is an important component of any strategy aimed at, inter alia, such areas as poverty reduction, sustainable development, health, youth empowerment, climate change, disaster prevention and management, social integration, humanitarian action, peacebuilding and, in particular, overcoming social exclusion and discrimination,

Acknowledging the existing contribution of the organizations of the United Nations system in support of volunteering, especially the work of the United Nations Volunteers programme around the world, and acknowledging also the efforts of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to promote volunteerism throughout its global network,

Bearing in mind the need for an integrated and coordinated follow-up to the International Year of Volunteers to be pursued in the relevant parts of the United Nations system,

1. *Welcomes* the successful observance of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers in 2011, and also welcomes the growth and development of volunteerism since the International Year of Volunteers in 2001;

2. *Acknowledges* that the tenth anniversary has provided the opportunity and impetus for an increased and unprecedented level of collaboration among Governments, the United Nations system, civil society, private sector partners, and people from a broad cross-section of societies all over the world, and reaffirms the need for further efforts to achieve the goals of the International Year in the areas of the recognition, facilitation, networking and promotion of volunteerism worldwide;

3. *Commends* the contributions from national and international volunteers for their fundamental role in disaster prevention and recovery, most recently evidenced in their performance in the aftermath of natural catastrophes in many parts of the world, such as mass landslides and floods in south-eastern Brazil and the devastating earthquake that struck eastern Japan in March 2011;

4. *Also commends* the increasing link between volunteerism and sports, which, through the invaluable contributions of national and international volunteers to the preparation and organization of major sport events such as the Olympic and the Paralympic Games, contributes to the promotion of the ideal of peace;

5. *Recognizes* the valuable contribution of volunteering, including traditional forms of mutual aid and self-help and other forms of civic participation,

to social and economic development, thus benefiting society at large, communities and volunteer networks;

6. *Encourages* Member States to support the setting up of knowledge and information platforms, as well as focal points at international, regional, national and local levels, in order to foster the sharing of resources and good practices of volunteerism that could be adapted, implemented, replicated and scaled up on a sustained basis;

7. *Encourages* Member States and volunteers to take appropriate steps to enhance the protection of volunteers, and also encourages the adoption of good practices in the promotion and management of volunteerism;

8. *Reaffirms* the need to recognize and promote all forms of volunteerism in order to engage and benefit all segments of society, including women, children, young persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, minorities, migrants and those who remain excluded for social or economic reasons;

9. *Acknowledges* the importance of civil society organizations to the promotion of volunteerism, and, in that respect, recognizes that strengthening the dialogue and interaction among Member States, the United Nations and civil society contributes to the expansion of volunteerism;

10. *Takes note* that volunteerism contributes to human development, and invites Governments to integrate volunteering more fully into peace and development programmes and initiatives, which offer opportunities to build strong and cohesive volunteer coalitions around shared goals at local, national, regional and international levels;

11. *Also takes note* of the actions taken by Governments to support and promote volunteerism, and reiterates its call upon them to continue such action;

12. *Calls upon* the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to further recognize and integrate volunteerism in its various forms into their policies, programmes and reports, recognizes the contributions of volunteers and volunteer organizations, and encourages their participation in future United Nations and other relevant international conferences;

13. *Recognizes* the importance of further involving all relevant partners, including civil society, and facilitating their coordination and cooperation towards creating an enabling environment where individuals can engage in volunteer activities and promoting the well-being of volunteers, welcomes in this regard the expanding involvement of the private sector in support of volunteerism, and encourages its further engagement through expanding corporate volunteering and employee volunteer activities;

14. *Welcomes* the work of the United Nations Volunteers as the focal point for the tenth anniversary of the International Year in support of Member States, including by co-hosting regional consultations and the global volunteer conferences for the tenth anniversary of the International Year, held in Quito, Ankara, Manila and Dakar, preparatory to the Global Volunteer Conference co-hosted with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, held in Budapest from 15 to 17 September 2011, as well as the Department of Public Information/Non-Governmental Organizations Conference, held in Bonn, Germany, from 3 to 5 September 2011, and requests the United Nations Volunteers to continue

their efforts to promote volunteerism, including through the mobilization of national and international volunteers and the development of newer and innovative recruitment modalities such as online volunteering;

15. *Emphasizes* that people-to-people relations are the core value of volunteerism, and encourages further efforts to build and strengthen networks among volunteers and all relevant partners at the national, regional and international levels, including the World Volunteer Web as a global networking hub;

16. *Welcomes* the active engagement of national committees and coordinating bodies in the promotion of the tenth anniversary of the International Year, and emphasizes the importance of further enhancing this global network for building their partnership and sharing experiences and good practices;

17. *Recognizes* the need to further strengthen the link between domestic volunteers and international volunteer-sending organizations in order to facilitate the globalization of volunteer opportunities;

18. *Emphasizes* the important contribution of volunteering to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and calls for a people-centred, holistic approach to the promotion of volunteering;

19. *Also emphasizes* the important contribution of volunteering and the participation of individuals and communities to the achievement of sustainable development and related initiatives;

20. *Further emphasizes* that volunteerism offers valuable opportunities for youth engagement and leadership to contribute to the development of peaceful and inclusive societies, while also allowing youth to acquire skills, build their capacities and increase their employability;

21. *Requests* Governments and the United Nations system to work together with other volunteer-involving organizations to support efforts to enhance the security and protection of volunteers;

22. *Encourages* the preparedness of volunteer-involving organizations and volunteers for respecting national and local norms and customs in performing their responsibilities;

23. *Decides* that two plenary meetings devoted to the follow-up to the International Year and the commemoration of its tenth anniversary will be held as follows:

(a) At the opening of the plenary meeting, to be held at 10 a.m. on 5 December 2011, statements will be made by the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, the chairs of the five regional groups, the representative of the host country and the Executive Coordinator of the United Nations Volunteers;

(b) Following the opening of the plenary meetings, the launch of the first *State of the World Volunteerism Report* will be held until 1 p.m., with the participation of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, the chief author of the report and two selected United Nations Volunteers;

(c) At the plenary meeting to be held from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m., statements will be made by Member States and those with a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and the work of the General Assembly;[1]

24. *Looks forward* to a full report on the marking of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of Volunteers, as well as recommendations to further integrate volunteering in peace and development during the next decade and beyond, bearing in mind the request to the Secretary-General to report on this subject to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session under the item entitled "Social development".

[1] As listed in A/INF/65/5.